

# Pennsylvania Parents Warned To Check Kids' Toys For Safety

By Danielle Smith / Keystone State News Connection

The National Retail Federation expects shoppers will have spent nearly \$989 billion in November and December for holiday gift-giving. Unfortunately, though, Pennsylvania

parents or other caring adults may have been unaware of safety hazards when they purchased toys. Comments from Don Fountain, product liability attorney with Clark Fountain, LLP.

As holiday spending in Pennsylvania and across the nation is expected to reach a record high of nearly \$989 billion, there's

no guarantee that everyone who bought toys for the kids in their lives thought about whether they were safe.

Many children's toys are manufactured in other countries such as China and India. In their haste to avoid possible Trump administration tariffs, said Don Fountain, a product-liability attorney at Clark Fountain LLP, a few safety steps may have been skipped before sending these products to the United States.

He said he believes consumers' assumptions about toy reliability are not always accurate. "The general public has this notion that the government checks and tests all the products that we buy: 'Surely somebody has tested all these things and they're safe for my children or my family.' But in reality, that's not how it works," he said. "The government doesn't have the resources or the ability, or I don't think even the interest, in doing that."

The Consumer Product Safety Commission website lists thousands of unsafe or problematic items. Fountain noted that complaints listed on the site are due to public grievances, not government detection. He recommended that the commission's website, Safer-products.gov, report or search for information about unsafe products.

Last year, according to a report released in November, the commission said hospital emergency rooms treated children ages seven months to 14 years for nearly 232,000 toy-related incidents linked to choking, chemical burns or poisoning. Fountain also identified other hazards to look for, such as sharp or pointed objects, small pieces and moving parts on toys.

"Pinch points are a real problem - things where two pieces come together that can cut or pinch or trap somebody or choke somebody," he said. "Anything that gets hot - anything that involves fire or spark or fireworks - those types of things."

Fountain noted that taking photographs and keeping the defective product and its packaging, and a purchase receipt is helpful to support your case should legal action occur. Without this evidence, he added, proving your complaint and the damage it caused could be difficult.



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By Andria M. Zaia / President & CEO NMIH

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We hope to see you at the Museum and out in the community soon. Please read on for upcoming programs and events.



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